

Message Text

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ORIGIN ACDA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 DOE-11 SOE-02
NRC-07 DLOS-09 PM-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 OES-07
/127 R

DRAFTED BY ACDA/PA:JMPOPE:CF
APPROVED BY ACDA/PA:TAHALSTED
-----042054 270210Z /62

P 262247Z JAN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
INFO USDEL MBFR VIENNA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

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USSALTTWO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: JANUARY 25 PRESS ROUNDUP

LONDON FOR AMB/EX

1. AMERICAN PAPERS GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO JAN. 24
CRASH OF SOVIET SPY SATELLITE WITH NUCLEAR REACTOR ABOARD
THAT HAD BEEN FALTERING IN ORBIT, BEYOND MOSCOW'S ABILITY
TO CONTROL. STRESSED WAS SECRET COOPERATIVE EFFORT OF
US AND USSR AIMED AT MINIMIZING POSSIBLE RADIOACTIVE CON-
TAMINATION AND AVERTING PUBLIC PANIC. "FORTUNATELY," SAID
RICHARD LYONS OF NEW YORK TIMES, "COSMOS 954 BURNED UP
OVER ONE OF LEAST INHABITED REGIONS IN WORLD, GREAT SLAVE
LAKE AREA OF NORTHWESTERN CANADA." CHARLES CORDDRY OF
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BALTIMORE SUN SAID COMPUTERS IN CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN, AIR AND
SPACE DEFENSE COMMAND POST OUTSIDE COLORADO, SPRING,
COLORADO, GAVE FAIR ESTIMATE OF WHEN COSMOS 954 WOULD END
ITS LIFE. WHERE ITS FRAGMENTS WOULD LAND WAS UNCERTAIN.
"SO OFFICIALS PRUDENTLY AVOIDED SPREADING ALARM AND MADE NO
ANNOUNCEMENT UNTIL COSMOS DISINTEGRATED," SUN CORRESPONDENT
SAID. CORDDRY SAID OFFICERS AT COLORADO SPRINGS SAID THEIR

TRACKING BOARDS SHOWED 4,546 ITEMS IN ORBIT, MANY OF THEM
PIECES OF SPACE "JUNK" FROM SATELLITES NO LONGER ACTIVE.
IMPORTANT ITEMS ON TRACKING BOARDS AND DISPLAY MAPS AT

CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN WERE 392 U.S. EARTH SATELLITES, 461
SOVIET AND 86 OTHERS. CORDDRY SAID COSMOS 954 WAS KNOWN
-- THROUGH INTELLIGENCE MEANS AVAILABLE TO AMERICANS -- TO
BE SEA SURVEILLANCE SATELLITE. REACTOR SUPPLIED ELECTRI-
CITY TO OPERATE DEVICES THAT TRACK SHIPS AND RELAY DATA
TO MOSCOW. "SUCH SPY CRAFT IN SPACE ARE, FOR BOTH EAST
AND WEST," HE ADDED, "PRIMARY MEANS OF CHECKING ON MILI-
TARY MOVEMENTS AND VERIFYING COMPLIANCE WITH ARMS CONTROL
AGREEMENTS."

2. HENRY TREWHITT OF BALTIMORE SUN SAID U.S. OFFICIALS
WHO FIRST ANNOUNCED SATELLITE'S REENTRY INTO ATMOSPHERE,
SAID DANGEROUS CONTAMINATION WAS UNLIKELY AND THAT THERE
NEVER WAS ANY DANGER OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. AT WHITE
HOUSE, ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI MADE FIRST PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
OF REENTRY TWO HOURS AFTER IT OCCURRED. TREWHITT SAID
BRZEZINSKI GAVE SOVIET AUTHORITIES AND THOSE OF OTHER
COUNTRIES -- UNSP: CIFIED -- HIGHMARKS FOR COOPERATING
AS U.S. TRACKED SATELLITE FOR DAYS. "OTHER SOURCES WERE
LESS GENTLE IN THEIR APPRAISAL OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR.
'AFTER ALL, DIPLOMAT HERE SAID, 'THEY VOLUNTEERED
NOTHING. WE HAD TO SQUEEZE.'" TREWHITT SAID USSR TOOK
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NO OFFICIAL NOTICE OF INCIDENT UNTIL HOURS AFTER U.S.
AND CANADA ISSUED ANNOUNCEMENTS. USSR HAD REGISTERED
LAUNCHING OF 954 COSMOS SERIES WITH UNITED NATIONS IN
SEPTEMBER AS REQUIRED BY INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. ITS
PURPOSE WAS LISTED MERELY AS 'SPACE EXPLORATION.,

3. THOMAS O'TOOLE OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT INTEL-
LIGENCE SOURCES HAVE KNOWN FOR SOME TIME THAT SOVIET
OCEAN-SURVEILLANCE SATELLITES GET THEIR POWER FROM NUCLEAR
REACTORS. SOURCES SAID REACTORS HOLD 110 POUNDS OF
HIGHLY ENRICHED URANIUM, SAME KIND OF FUEL USED IN
ATOMIC SUBMARINES AND SAME TYPE OF URANIUM USED TO MAKE
NUCLEAR BOMBS. THAT MUCH URANIUM PRODUCES AT LEAST 100
KILOWATTS OF ELECTRICITY, ENOUGH TO POWER AN ACTIVE RADAR
SYSTEM THAT COULD PENETRATE CLOUDS TO IDENTIFY SURFACE
SHIPS BIGGER THAN TUGBOAT ANYWHERE IN WORLD. IT COULD
DISTINGUISH TARGETS AD DIFFERENT AS AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER
OR SURFACING NUCLEAR SUBMARINE." O'TOOLE SAID SOVIET
SATELLITE'S REACTOR COULD HAVE PRODUCED ABOUT 100,000
CURIES OF FISSION PRODUCTS LIKE STRONTIUM-90 AND CESIUM-
137. "AT BEST, THESE WASTES WERE BURNED UP WITH SATELLITE
OVER WESTERN CANADA AT SUCH HIGH ALTITUDES THAT THEY

WERE TAKEN BY UPPER AIR WINDS AND CARRIED ALL OVER GLOBE WHERE THEY MIGHT STAY FOR YEARS TO COME. AT WORST, THEY SETTLED DOWN TOWARD EARTH WITH RAIN AND SNOW THAT BROUGHT THEM TO REST ON PASTURELAND ACROSS NORTHERN REACHES OF WESTERN CANADA."

4. OSWALD JOHNSTON OF LOS ANGELES TIMES REPORTED JAN. 21 THAT "VIRTUALLY ALL OF KEY ISSUES OF NEW STRATEGIC ARMS AGREEMENT WITH SOVIET UNION ARE STILL UNRESOLVED AND AGREEMENT ON NEW TREATY THAT SEEMED WITHIN REACH ONLY FEW MONTHS AGO IS NOW BELIEVED UNLIKELY BEFORE JUNE -- IF THEN." HE SAID CARTER ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL, BRIEFING REPORTERS, "PRESENTED SOMBER VIEW OF PROSPECTS FOR STRATEGIC ARMS AGREEMENT THAT CAST HARSHER LIGHT ON CRYPTIC UNCLASSIFIED

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REFERENCE TO ARMS TALKS IN PRESIDENT'S STATE OF UNION MESSAGE...." BEHIND THIS ASSESSMENT, OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SAID, IS BELIEF BY CARTER AND HIS TOP ADVISERS THAT ADMINISTRATION "HAS BEEN AS ACCOMMODATING AS TRAFFIC WILL BEAR" IN MAKING CONCESSIONS TO RUSSIANS, AND THAT ONLY HOPE FOR RAPID PROGRESS TOWARD TREATY IS FOR SOVIETS TO MAKE POLITICAL DECISION TO COMPROMISE. IT WAS MADE CLEAR, JOHNSTON REPORTED, THAT THIS IS CONSIDERED UNLIKELY AND THAT PROSPECT IS FOR LONG, SLOW AND DELIBERATE PROCESS OF SUSTAINED NEGOTIATIONS INTO SUMMER. JOHNSTON SAID REPORTERS WERE TOLD DEFINITELY THAT THERE IS NO AGREEMENT ON NUMERICAL LEVELS OR, FOR THAT MATTER, ON MOST OF KEY ISSUES ON WHICH OPTIMISM OF LAST OCTOBER WAS BASED. COMPROMISE IS STILL UNCERTAIN ON CEILING FOR MISSILES AND STRATEGIC BOMBERS, AND SUBLIMITS ON MISSILES CARRYING MULTIPLE WARHEADS AND LAND-BASED MISSILES EQUIPPED WITH MULTIPLE WARHEADS, JOHNSTON REPORTED. HE SAID BASIC DEFINITIONS OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS ARE STILL UNRESOLVED. 'ALSO IN QUESTION IS EARLIER ACCORD SETTING 1,500 MILE RANGE LIMIT ON AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES AND 375 MILE RANGE LIMIT ON GROUND AND SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILE." JOHNSTON SAID BASIC QUESTIONS OF VERIFICATION ALSO REMAIN, AND BACKFIRE ALSO REMAINS UNRESOLVED ISSUE SINCE SOVIETS "HAVE ADAMANTLY REFUSED TO INCLUDE IT IN AN AGREEMENT COVERING STRATEGIC WEAPONS."

5. BALTIMORE NEWS AMERICAN ON JAN. 23 PUBLISHED JOHN WALLACH'S INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR WARNKE. SOVIET UNION INTENDS TO DEVELOP ITS OWN CRUISE MISSILES AS WELL AS AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM AGAINST AMERICAN CRUISE, WALLACH REPORTED, QUOTING WARNKE AS SAYING, "I WOULD IMAGINE THAT IF YOU LOOK AT WHAT THEY'VE DONE IN PAST, THEY'LL DO BOTH. THEY HAVE EMPHASIZED AIR DEFENSE MUCH MORE THAN WE HAVE, UNCLASSIFIED

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AT SAME TIME THEY'VE GONE AHEAD WITH THEIR BOMBERS." WALLACH SAID "THIS IS FIRST TIME THAT ANY AMERICAN OFFICIAL HAS PUBLICLY ACKNOWLEDGED APPARENT SOVIET AIM ALTHOUGH IT HAS BEEN WIDELY ASSUMED THAT ,OSCOW'S WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT LONG-RANGE TESTING OF GROUND AND SEA AS WELL AS AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISES IS BECAUSE KREMLIN WANTS TO DO SAME." HE QUOTED WARNKE AS SAYING "THEY'VE HAD CRUISE MISSILES FOR NUMBER OF YEARS. THEY ARE NOT MODERN,

SMALLER, WE THINK MORE ACCURATE TYPE THAT WE ARE NOW ABLE TO DEVELOP. BUT THEY ARE NOT LACKING CRUISE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY.... THERE'S NO REASON TO FEEL THEY COULD NOT DO PRETTY EFFECTIVE JOB OF MATCHING OUR DEVELOPMENTS. THEY ALWAYS SEEM TO. IT TAKES THEM LITTLE LONGER. THEY DON'T DO IT QUITE AS WELL. BUT THEY DO IT." ASKED WHETHER HE EXPECTED TO COME BACK FROM NEXT ROUND OF GENEVA TALKS WITH AN AGREEMENT, WARNKE SAID "I CERTAINLY DO."

6. WASHINGTON STAR REPORTED THAT TRILATERAL TALKS ON COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN OPENED. DISPATCH REPORTED "WESTERN NEGOTIATORS SAID ROUND WHICH OPENED YESTERDAY (JAN. 23) WILL BE LENGTHY AND THEY HOPE TO KEEP GOING UNTIL FINAL AGREEMENT IS ACHIEVED -- PERHAPS WITHIN FOUR MONTHS." VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PRESS SUMMARIES, SALT (ARMS CONTROL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE021802
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JMPOPE:CF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780039-1111
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780118/aaaaaota.tel
Line Count: 198
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ac3009e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ACDA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 feb 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3706204
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JANUARY 25 PRESS ROUNDUP LONDON FOR AMB/EX
TAGS: PARM, SOPN, US, UR
To: GENEVA USSALTTWO
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ac3009e0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014